



DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Unit 1A & 1B - Rom Valley Way Retail Park,
Rom Valley Way, Romford, RM7 0AF

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.01 AIMS OF THE STATEMENT

This Design and Access Statement accompanies a full planning application by ALDI Stores Ltd for the redesign of an existing single retail unit to form a new Aldi Food Store and second retail unit at Rom Valley Way Retail Park, Romford.

The application includes for the redesign of the shopfront and service elevations, external alterations to the car park and service yard, and installation of refrigeration plant.

The aim of this Design and Access Statement is to show that the proposed development has been designed and informed by an awareness of the site's context and principles highlighted by the London Borough of Havering.

The statement will explain the proposals, identify the factors which have influenced this application and highlight the principles that were incorporated in the detailed design of this proposal.



Figure 1: Aerial View of Rom Valley Way Retail Park

2.0 SITE ASSESSMENT

2.01 LOCATION & MOVEMENT NETWORKS

The application site is part of an existing retail park in East London, within the London Borough of Havering. The retail park is currently home to B&M, Pets at Home and Carpet Right, along with a vacant former Mothercare unit which is the subject of this application.

Rom Valley Way Retail Park is located immediately off Rom Valley Way (A125) which leads in to central Romford. The Park is visibly prominent from the highway, with the Carpet Right and Mothercare frontages facing directly out on to the road.

Vehicular access to the site is from a traffic-lit junction leading to an access road. From this, the car parking areas to the two parts of the retail park are available.

To the immediate West of the site is Queen's Hospital and Oldchurch Park, with industrial, retail and residential uses to the South and East. To the North is central Romford which features a diverse commercial and retail environment.

The site benefits from good transport links due to its location on the A125 and having eight bus stops within a 200m radius. In addition to this, Romford Overground and Train station is approximately 12 minutes walk to the North, providing convenient access to central London.



Figure 2: Existing Retail Terrace from the Access Road

2.02 LAND USE

The application site is a large vacant former Mothercare unit with an E use classification. The retail park benefits from a separate car park and service yard, although the lining of staff parking bays within the service yard causes potential for delivery manoeuvres to be restricted. The car park fronts directly on to Rom Valley Way and is therefore in a highly prominent and visible position. However, the existing lighting arrangement is sub-standard and dated, with just two flood lit columns attempting to cover the whole space.

In the surrounding area, dense residential neighbourhoods to the East and South provide a good catchment for retail, with Tesco Extra and B&Q also being located to the South-East and a Homebase to the North-West.

2.03 ARCHITECTURE

The former Mothercare unit is part of a retail terrace with the adjacent Carpet Right store, and the building takes the form of a portal-framed structure with gable frontages and an off-centre valley.

Whilst the form of the two units is similar, materiality and finish is inconsistent. The Carpet Right features a low-level glazed shopfront with grey flat cladding above, whilst the Mothercare presents a large expanse of high-level glazing and mix of grey vertically and horizontally laid cladding of a profiled nature. The Mothercare unit's façade is functional but tired, with an array of ducts and vents creating a haphazard and unsightly arrangement.

The B&M and Pets at Home building on the other side of the retail park is of a different aesthetic, with brick piers accentuated by grey metal cladding panels and limited low level glazing between.

Three and four storey brick apartment buildings with pitched tile roofs are situated to the North East of the site and other residential properties

to the South and East are generally two or two and a half storeys, again with pitched, tiled roofs.

The Homebase store to the North-East is of an industrial aesthetic with metal cladding in varieties of grey and green, and Queen's Hospital to the West is of significant proportions, featuring buff brick facades and four prominent drum-like elements at high level.



Figure 3: View from Car Park to Existing Front Elevation



Figure 4: View of B&M and Pets at Home Stores Across the Access Road

3.03 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The existing vehicular access off Rom Valley Way is to be retained, but a minor proposed adjustment to the kerb line on the entrance to the car park will ease a tight 90 degree turn. Two new LED columns are proposed at the site entrance to illuminate the access road. New road and footpath markings on the access road will be provided. Other changes that are proposed to the car park include the removal of a trolley bay, provision of 8 Sheffield stands (16 cycle spaces) for customers, replacement of the two existing lighting stanchions with four LED columns running between lines of parking bays and installing two LED columns next to pedestrian bridge. This proposed lighting arrangement will provide a more consistent spread of light throughout the car park, creating a safer shopping environment for customers whilst minimising light spill to the highway.

A net loss of 8 customer parking spaces is proposed to the car park, mainly as the result of the removal of spaces directly outside the entrances to both units to create a quality pedestrian apron surfaced in tarmac. Two new accessible parking bays are to be provided adjacent to the ALDI unit, increasing disabled provision above the existing level.

Within the service yard, 16 staff parking bays are proposed to be removed to create a clear area for vehicles to manoeuvre without disruption. This is partially offset with the introduction of three new bays to give an overall net loss of 13 staff parking bays. New secure store with 6 staff cycle spaces is to be provided in the service yard as well.

Servicing for both units is on the existing building line, with a new raised dock leveller for the ALDI unit and a roller shutter door for Unit 1B. Adjacent to these is the proposed location for the ALDI refrigeration plant, designed in a bespoke 'double-stacked' arrangement to reduce the use of space. A noise assessment is provided as part of this application which demonstrates the plant's relationship with the neighbouring properties.

The front façade of the existing Mothercare unit is proposed to be stripped back to its frame and re-clad with contemporary metal

cladding. The ALDI unit is to be clad horizontally, acting harmoniously with the new projecting canopy and full-length glazed shopfront, whilst Unit B is to be clad vertically in order to balance the façade and strengthen visual interest.

The intention is deliver a simple yet modern appearance. One that works with the existing building form but displays a fresh aesthetic that is representative of modern retail design. As part of this, the increase in low level glazing helps to generate an active frontage, increasing its visual quality and bringing daylight in to the store.

Elsewhere on the building, minor alterations to fire escape doors (and associated footpaths) are present, with two high level windows also being incorporated to provide natural light to the ALDI amenity block.

As retail units, corporate signage will be essential to their operation. However, all signage shown is indicative and will form part of a separate signage application.



Figure 6: Proposed CGI of Development